

Spotlight on Crestwood Brother Quartus Greet You *Dipping a Toe into History*



Spotlight on Crestwood Brother Quartus Greet You: Dipping a Toe into History

"A made-up mind in a world that doubles its knowledge each ten years is a genuine example of concrete thinking. One's mind, like one's bed, should be messed up and made up again every day." James A. Lollis

I have thought of James Lollis' quotation many times this week as I have started again... and again... and again. . . writing and thinking of Crestwood's history and the important impact the early members and leaders have on us today.

My initial task was to only write about James and Lorraine Lollis, Crestwood's first ministerial couple. I became fascinated by them as I explored the chapel bearing their name. They were an extraordinary team, and both made exceptional long-term contributions to Crestwood, the Disciples, and the larger Christian community. Together they forged a socially-active, forward-looking future for us. I learned many details about them.

Then we learned of the passing of Sue Ann Cowgill, one of only two remaining adult charter members still attending Crestwood and of Tom Christerson, another long-time foundation of our church. I broadened my musings to include all the founding members who, in 1959, prayerfully left their congregations at Central, Woodland, and Arlington

Christian Churches to form a new Disciples congregation in the suburbs of Lexington. I thought of others who came soon afterwards.

I then learned something else interesting. Crestwood has a designated historian – Fran McKinney – who kindly mailed me an original program from the September 18, 2005, dedication of the Lollis Chapel. I found in it concrete evidence that the Chapel echoes with memories and dedications for members who have done much for our congregation over the years. Each item – The Holy Spirit Window, The Holy Spirit Painting, The Cross and Dove Sculpture, the Ceramic Chalice, and the Carved Wooden Celtic Cross - was a commissioned or specifically purchased art work given in the memory, honor, and celebrations of various individuals important to our church. Significant items of furniture, also listed, were gifted in individuals' names. The importance of the chapel to our overall history expanded my understanding.

The chapel apparently caught other people's attention this week, as well. Someone did a terrific job of spiffing it up. The chapel shines, the items have been polished and straightened. It is beautiful. In my eyes it has the right balance between worshipfulness, usefulness, and invitation. You should stop by and see it if it's not on your usual in-church route.

I decided to save the stories of Jim and Lorraine Lollis for later when I may delve into the history and personalities of many of those who went before.

But I can't put off the promised story of Brother Quartus as told by the Lollis' remaining son David and verified with other resources.

As early as 1942, according to the Disciple's library in West Virginia, the well-known national publication *The Christian Standard* published a well-read and much-discussed regular column entitled "*Brother Quartus Greets You.*" The author was anonymous. It was picked up later by the *Kentucky Christian* as well. It was a deeply thoughtful but humorous, occasionally controversial, column that dealt with important social issues and the relationship between Christian action and community service. The column increased in popularity while the identity of Brother Quartus remained unknown.

Sometime before 1960, as the state conference of the Disciples approached, the *Louisville Courier-Journal* published an article that announced that the author of the popular Brother Quartus column would be a guest speaker. Everyone was curious about the writer's identity and anticipation was high. When Jim Lollis was introduced and walked across the stage, his cover was blown, and the world knew that Brother Quartus and Jim Lollis were one and the same!

Jim had long been an influential writer and speaker within the Disciples' denomination. The Brother Quartus articles extended the reach of his forward-thinking ideas. His extraordinary wife Lorraine was also an author and wrote a book "*The Shape of Adam's Rib: A Lively History of Women's Work in the Christian Church.*" Published in 1970, it is still on sale on Amazon and other sites. There is a copy in our church library, I am told.

With a promise to return later to our historical roots and the fascinating Lollis family, I am moving on to the Child Care Center next – My, has Hopper Hall changed!

If there is some area of the church you would like to know more about, please share your ideas with me. Let's explore together.

Gaye Holman: gdholman@bellsouth.net.



The Shape of Adam's Rib

by LORRAINE LOLLIS

